



AFGHANISTAN



INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan served as a buffer between the British and Russian Empires until it won independence from British control in 1919. In August 2021, the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban overran the country; the latest group to rule in this war-torn country since 1979.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

to be determined

Head of Government

to be determined

Government Type

Islamic fundamentalist state

Capital

Kabul

Legislature

to be determined

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 652,230 sq km

Land: 652,230 sq km

Water: 0 sq km

Climate

arid to semiarid; cold winters and hot summers

Natural Resources

natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, chromite, talc, barites, sulfur, lead, zinc, iron ore, salt, precious and semiprecious stones, arable land

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

extremely low-income South Asian economy; import drops, currency depreciation, disappearing central bank reserves, and increasing inflation after Taliban takeover; increasing Chinese trade; hit hard by COVID; ongoing sanctions

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$77.04 billion (2020 est.)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$2,000 (2020 est.)

Industries - brick production, textiles, soap, furniture, shoes, fertilizer, apparel, food products, non-alcoholic beverages, mineral water, cement, handwoven carpets, natural gas, coal

Agricultural products - wheat, milk, grapes, vegetables, potatoes, watermelons, melons, rice, onions, apples

Exports \$1.48 billion (2020 est.)

gold, grapes, opium, fruits and nuts, insect resins, cotton, handwoven carpets, soapstone, scrap metal (2019)

partners: UAE 45%, Pakistan 24%, India 22%, China 1% (2019)

Imports \$6.98 billion (2020 est.)

wheat flours, broadcasting equipment, refined petroleum, rolled tobacco, aircraft parts, synthetic fabrics (2019)

partners: UAE 23%, Pakistan 17%, India 13%, China 9%, US 9%, Uzbekistan 7%, Kazakhstan 6% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

37.5 million (July 2021 est.)

Population Growth

2.34% (2021 est.)

Ethnicity

Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, other (includes smaller numbers of Baloch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Arab, Gujar, Brahui, Qizilbash, Aimaq, Pashai, and Kyrgyz) (2015)

Language

Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 78% (Dari functions as the lingua franca), Pashto (official) 50%, Uzbek 10%, English 5%, Turkmen 2%, Urdu 2%, Pashayi 1%, Nuristani 1%, Arabic 1%, Balochi 1%, other <1% (2017 est.)

Religion

Muslim 99.7% (Sunni 84.7 - 89.7%, Shia 10 - 15%), other 0.3% (2009 est.)

